

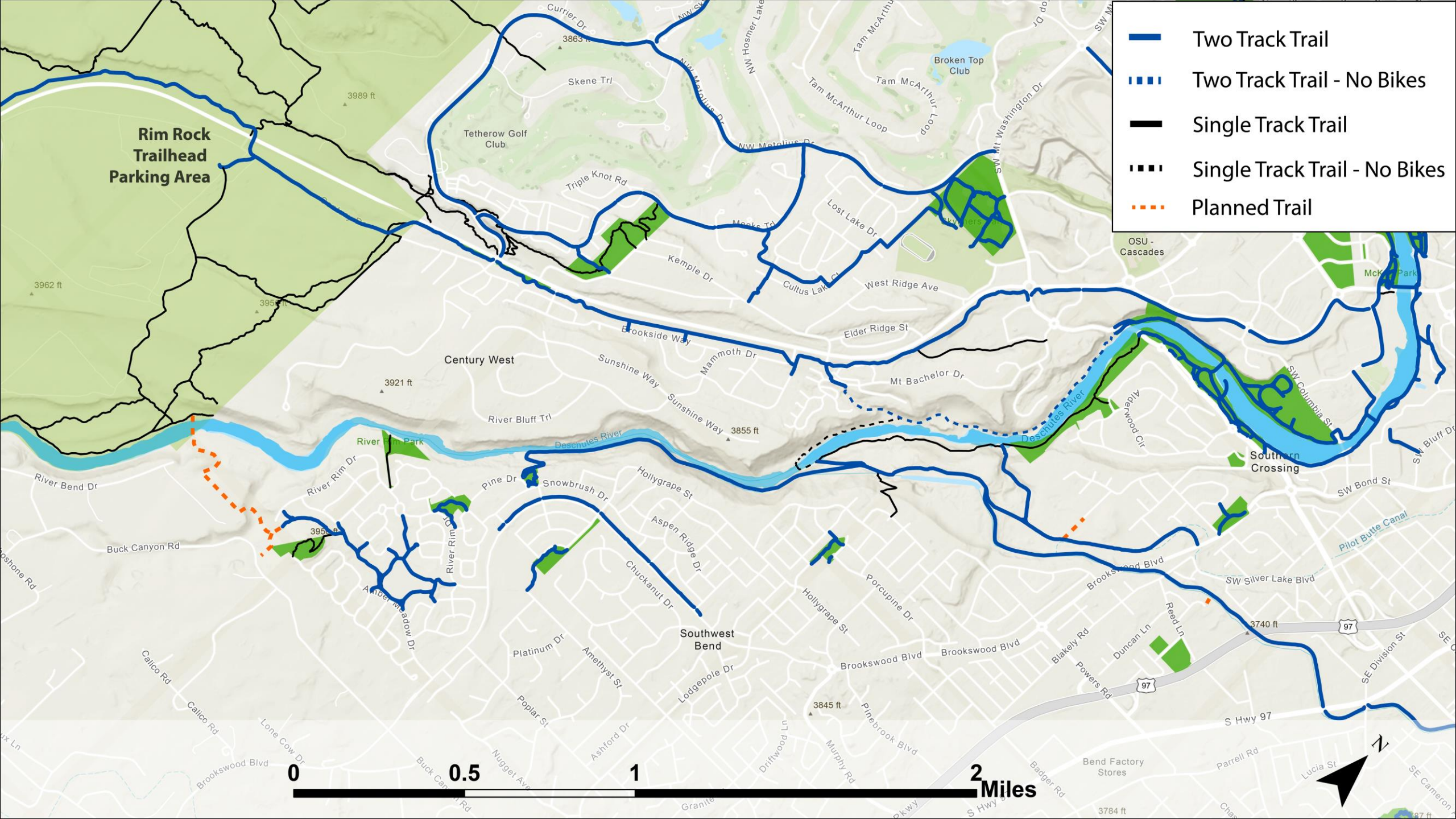
# Deschutes River Trail South - Refinement Study

## *Project Update*

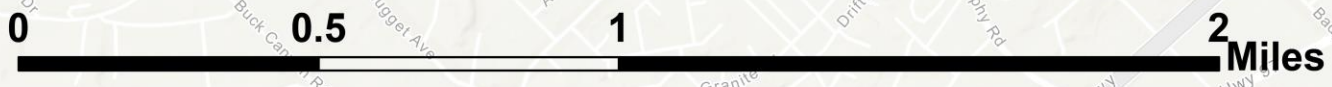
October 6, 2026

Henry Stroud, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Bend Park & Recreation District

Matt Kittelson  
Principal Engineer  
Kittelson & Associates, Inc.  
Transportation Engineering & Planning



- Two Track Trail
- Two Track Trail - No Bikes
- Single Track Trail
- Single Track Trail - No Bikes
- Planned Trail



# Deschutes River Trail South Refinement Study

- Interim step between planning & design
- Informs future decision-making, does not decide course of action
- Intent is to provide factual, accurate information about potential alternatives

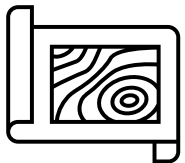


# Scope of Work

## Phase 1: Existing Conditions



Document existing conditions



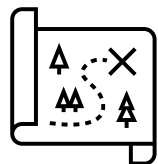
## Phase 2: Alternatives Development



Sectional (fatal flaw) analysis



Develop preliminary alternatives



## Phase 3: Alternatives Analysis



Alternatives Analysis



Identify two "preferred" alternatives



Board Approval for Phase 4



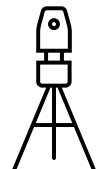
## Phase 4: Feasibility Studies



Draft Feasibility Studies



Final Feasibility Studies



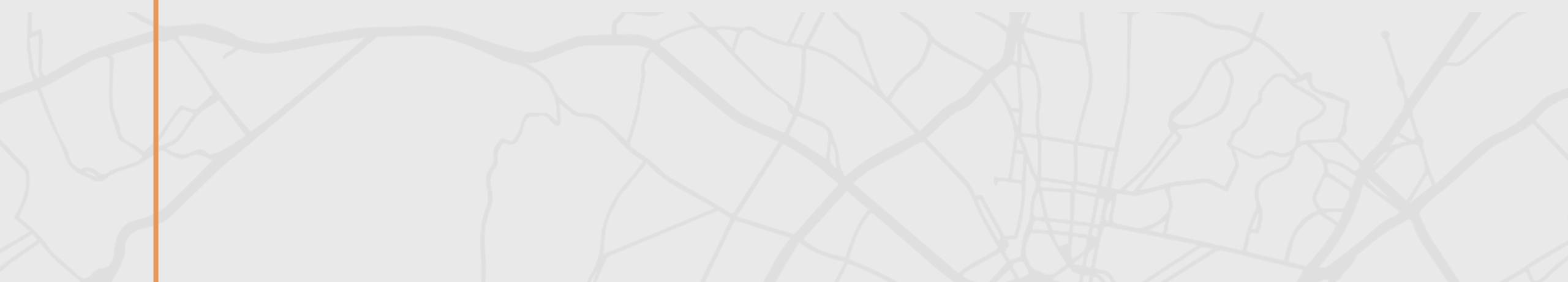
# STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

| Group/Agency/Organization                                | Name              |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| City of Bend Accessibility Committee                     | Carl Burnett      |
| Deschutes County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee | David Green       |
| Connect Bend                                             | Royce Kallerud    |
| Trout Unlimited                                          | Mike Tripp        |
| Oregon Wild                                              | Erik Fernandez    |
| Deschutes Trails Coalition                               | Jana Johnson      |
| Dogpac                                                   | Marilee Valkass   |
| Century West Neighborhood District                       | Elizabeth Justema |
| Southwest Bend Neighborhood District                     | Pam Tennant       |
| Southern Crossing Neighborhood District                  | Robbie Silverman  |
| US Forest Service                                        | Lisa Machnik      |
| ODFW                                                     | Jessica Wilkes    |
| City of Bend                                             | Janet Hruby       |



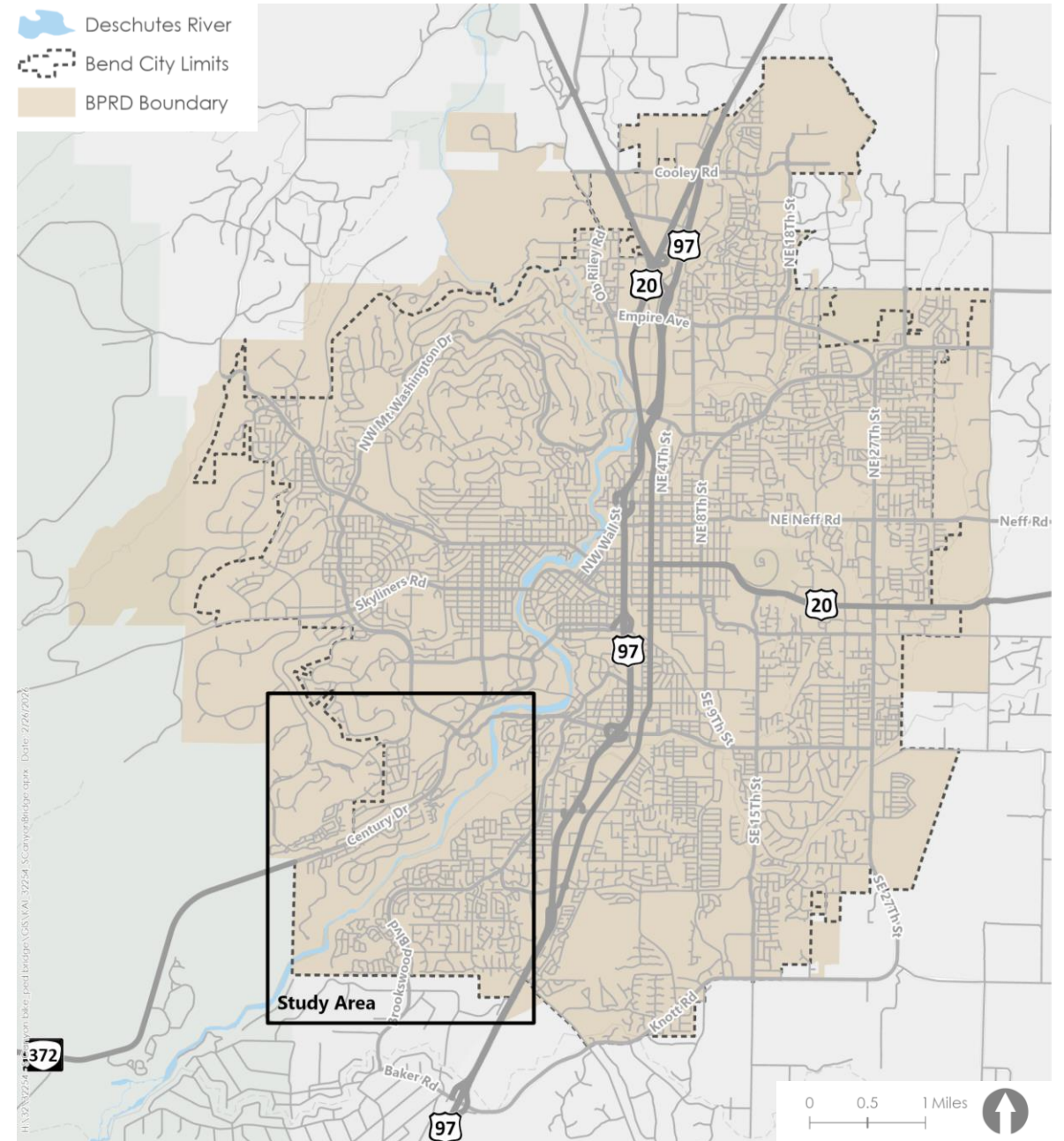


# EXISTING CONDITIONS OVERVIEW



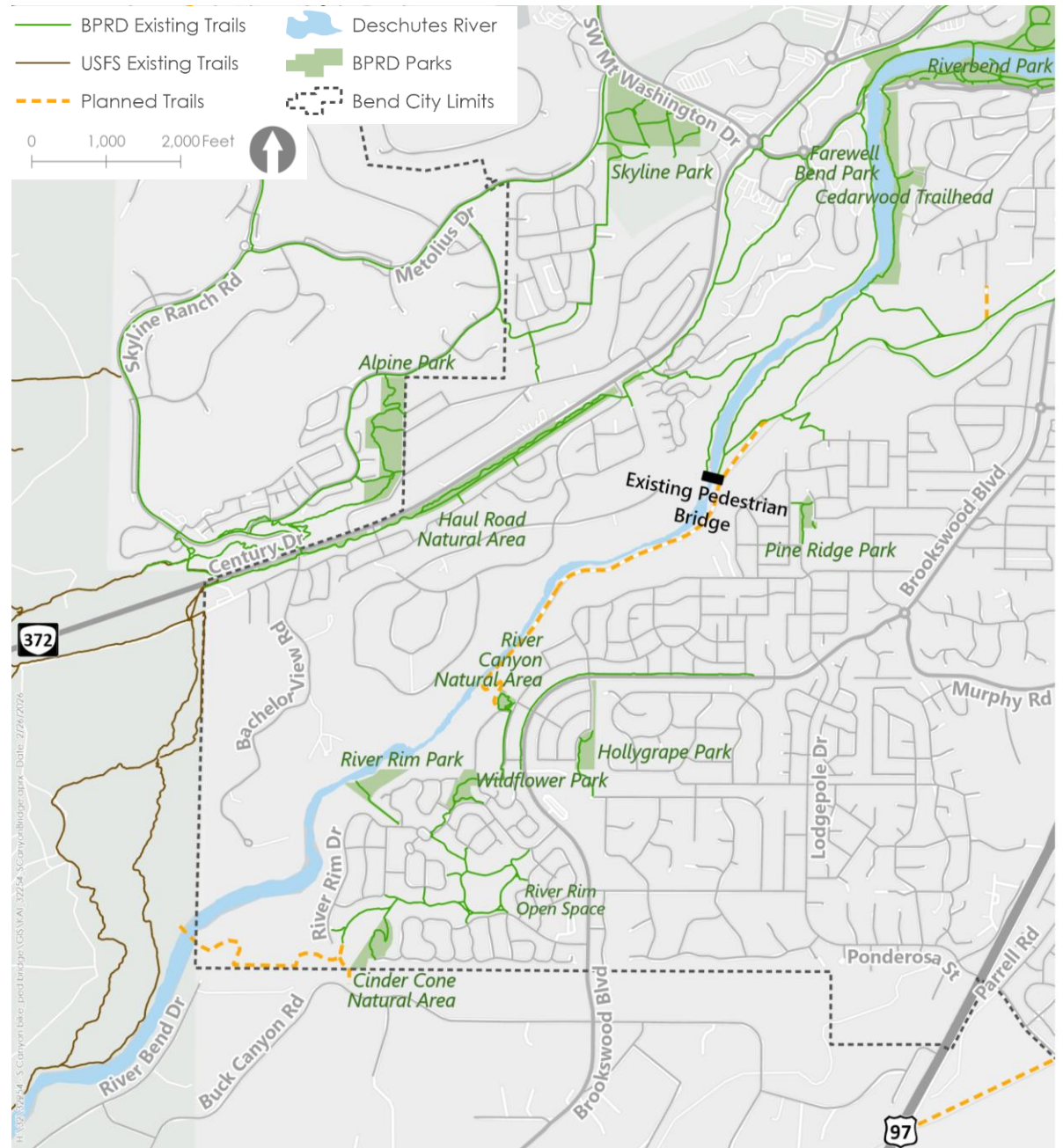
# THE RIVER CROSSING HAS BEEN PLANNED FOR 30 YEARS

- Southern bridge crossing are in:
  - Bend Urban Trails Plan (1996)
  - Bend & BPRD - Deschutes River Trail Action Plan (2002)
  - BPRD Trails Master Plan (2008)



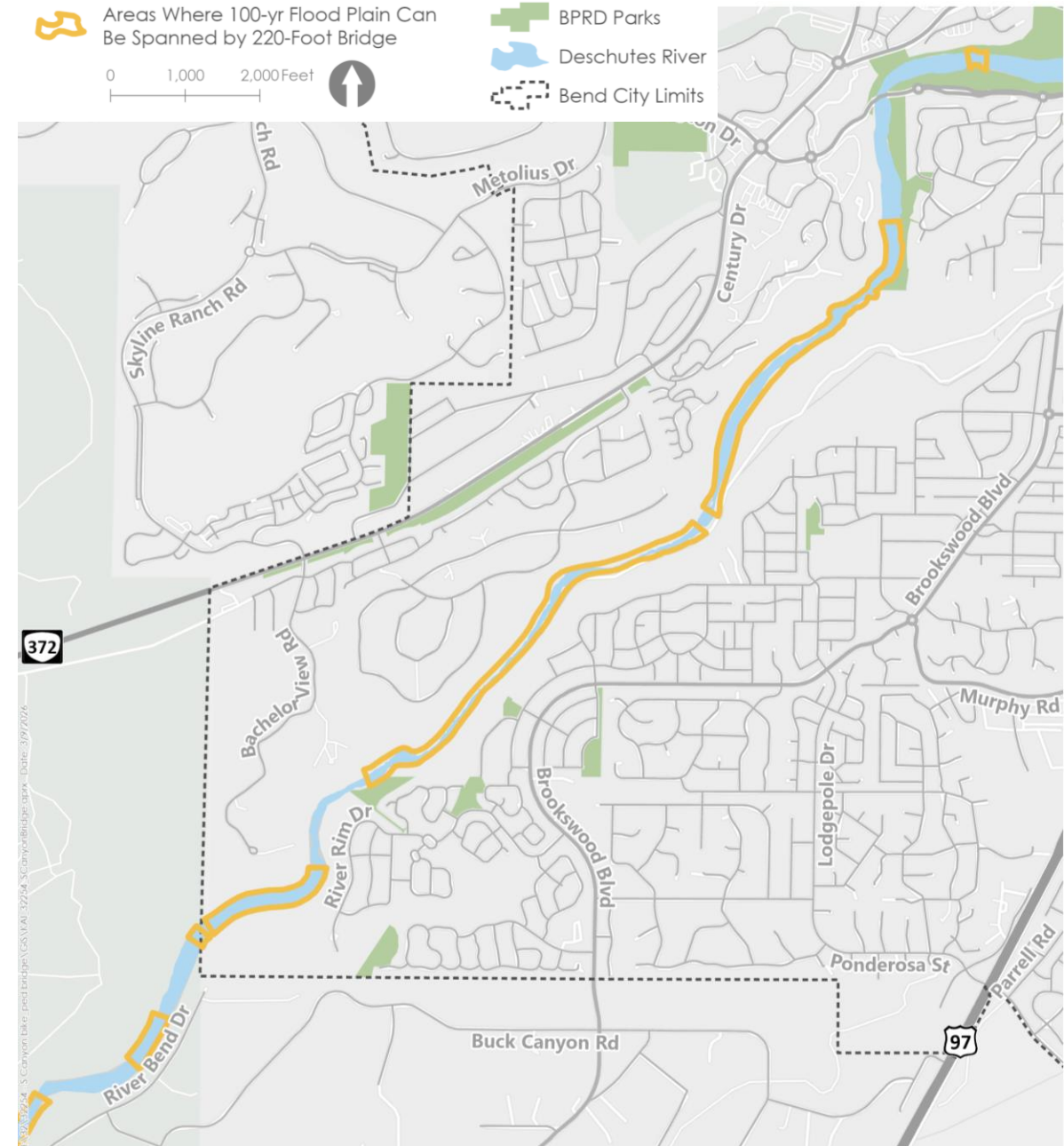
# LOCAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

- Healy Bridge (SW Reed Market Road) is the only road bridge across the Deschutes River in the study area.
  - Harper Bridge (Spring River Road) is the closest southern river crossing.
- The nearest pedestrian crossing is the Deschutes River Trail – South Canyon Reach Bridge.



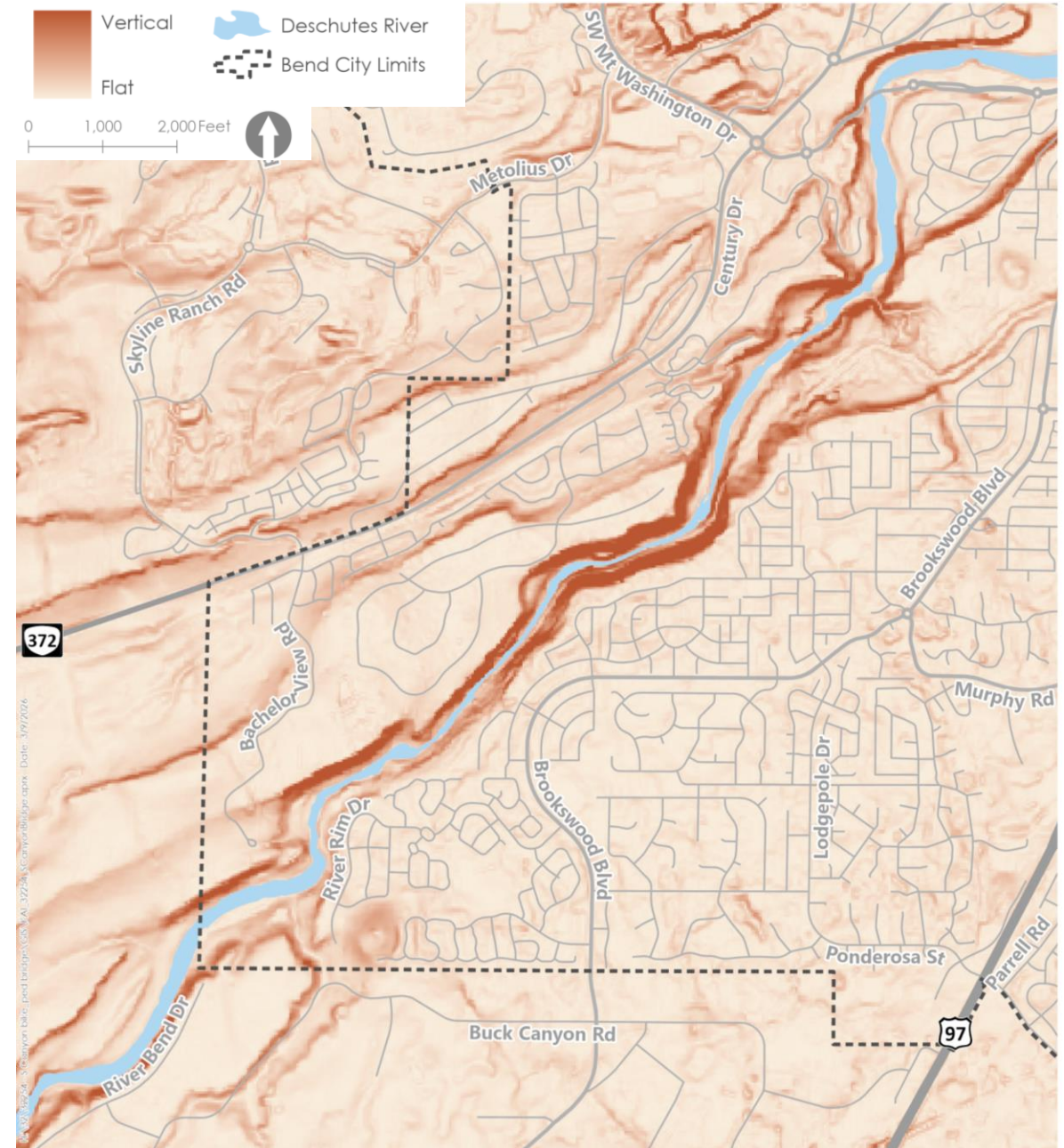
# PHYSICAL CROSSING CONSIDERATIONS

- A single-span bridge avoids piers and river impacts. The practical maximum span is ~220 feet.
  - Longer spans significantly increase cost, complexity, visual impact, and construction demands.



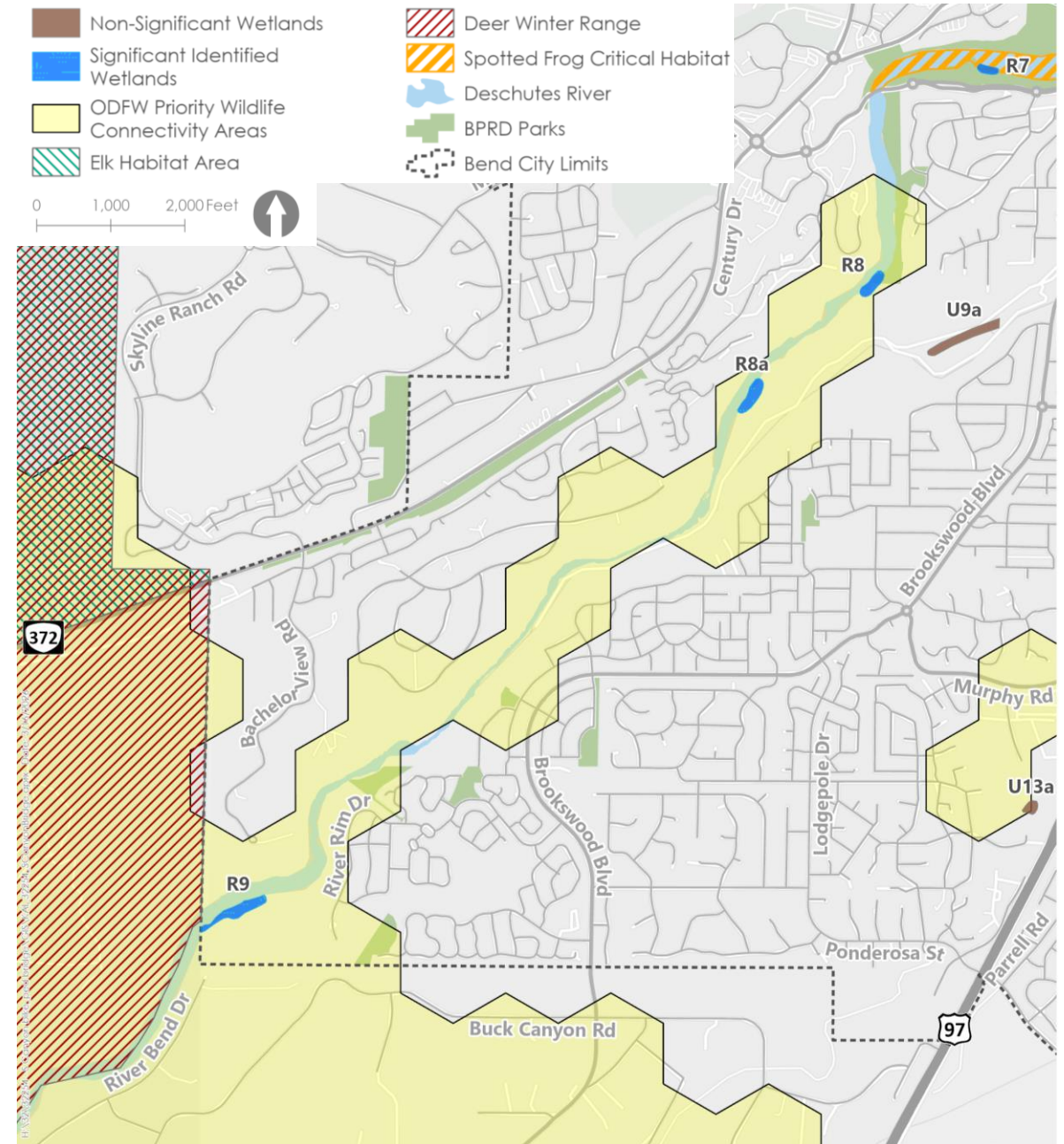
# PHYSICAL CROSSING CONSIDERATIONS (CONTINUED)

- Both riverbanks contain steep slopes, particularly north of River Rim Drive.
  - ADA-compliant trail grades will be a key consideration.



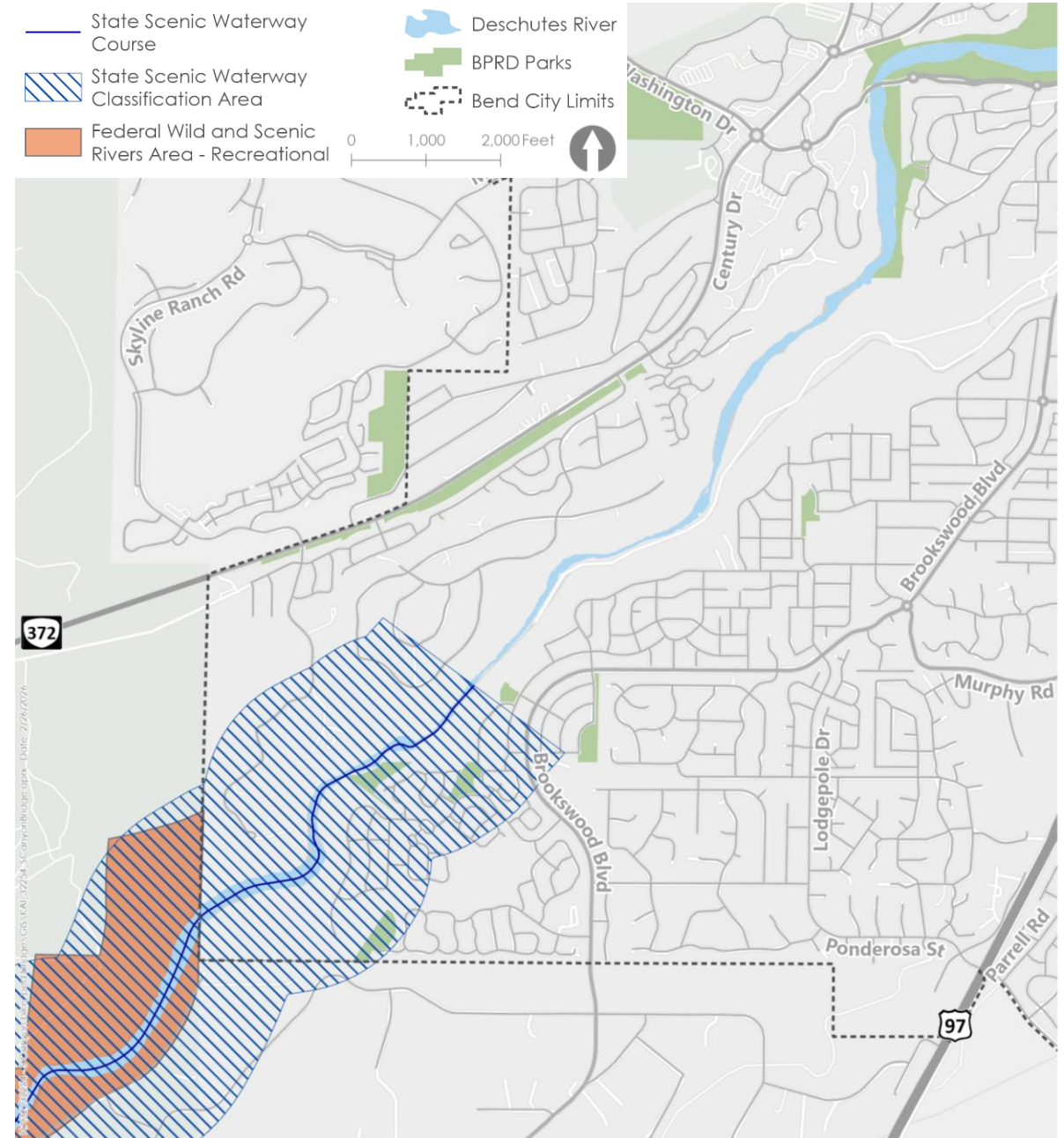
# ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- No designated critical habitat overlaps the immediate study area.
- Several Threatened and Endangered species may be present in the study area.
  - Portions of the study area overlap with mapped elk range and deer winter range.
- Several significantly identified wetlands are within the study area.



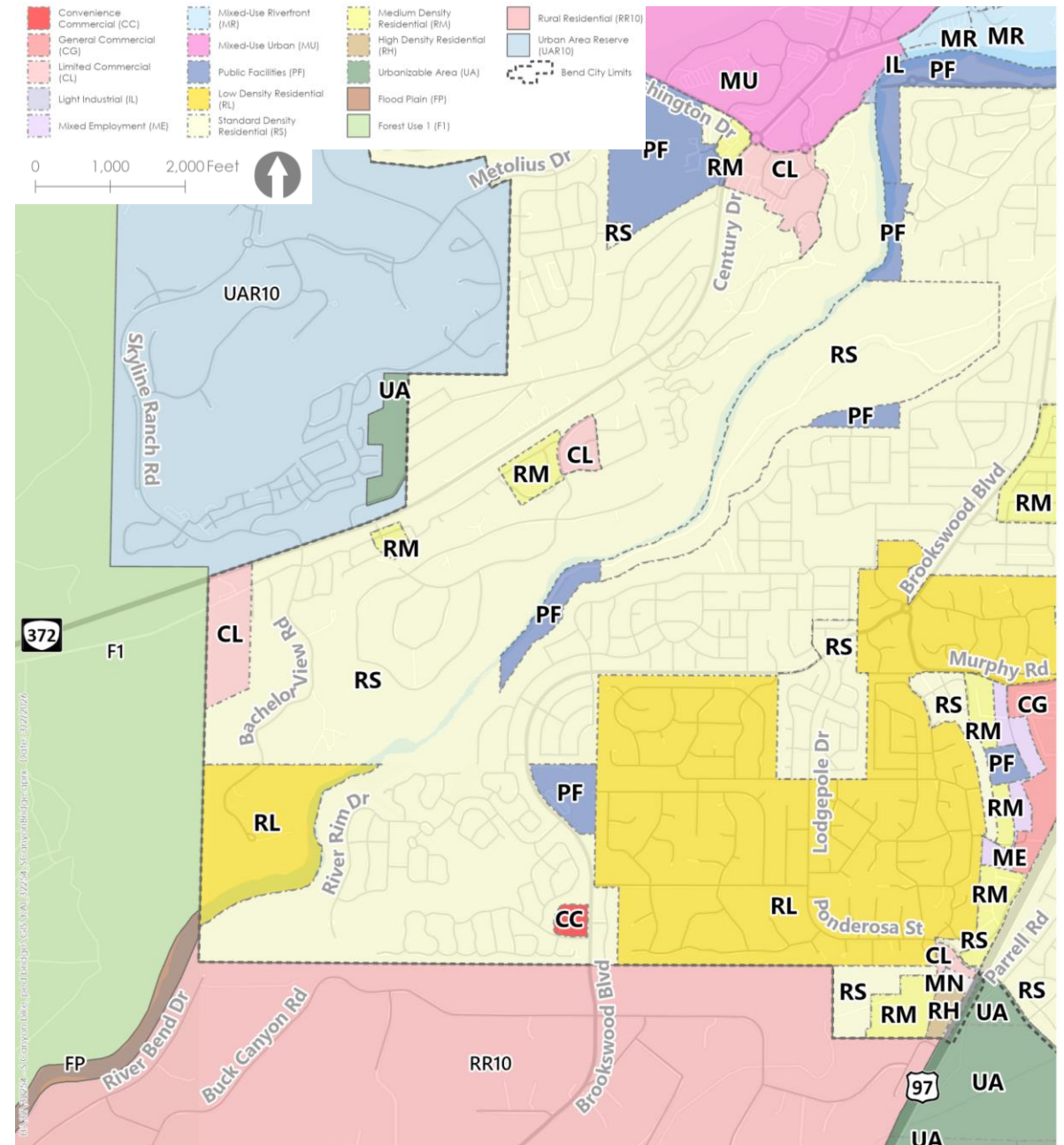
# FEDERAL AND STATE SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATIONS

- The corridor is part of federally-designated Wild and Scenic River, and a state-designated Scenic Waterway.
  - New bridges are not permitted in the designated area, but OPRD has an application process through which bridge construction may be considered.
- Various other federal and state environmental permits will likely be required before the bridge can be constructed.



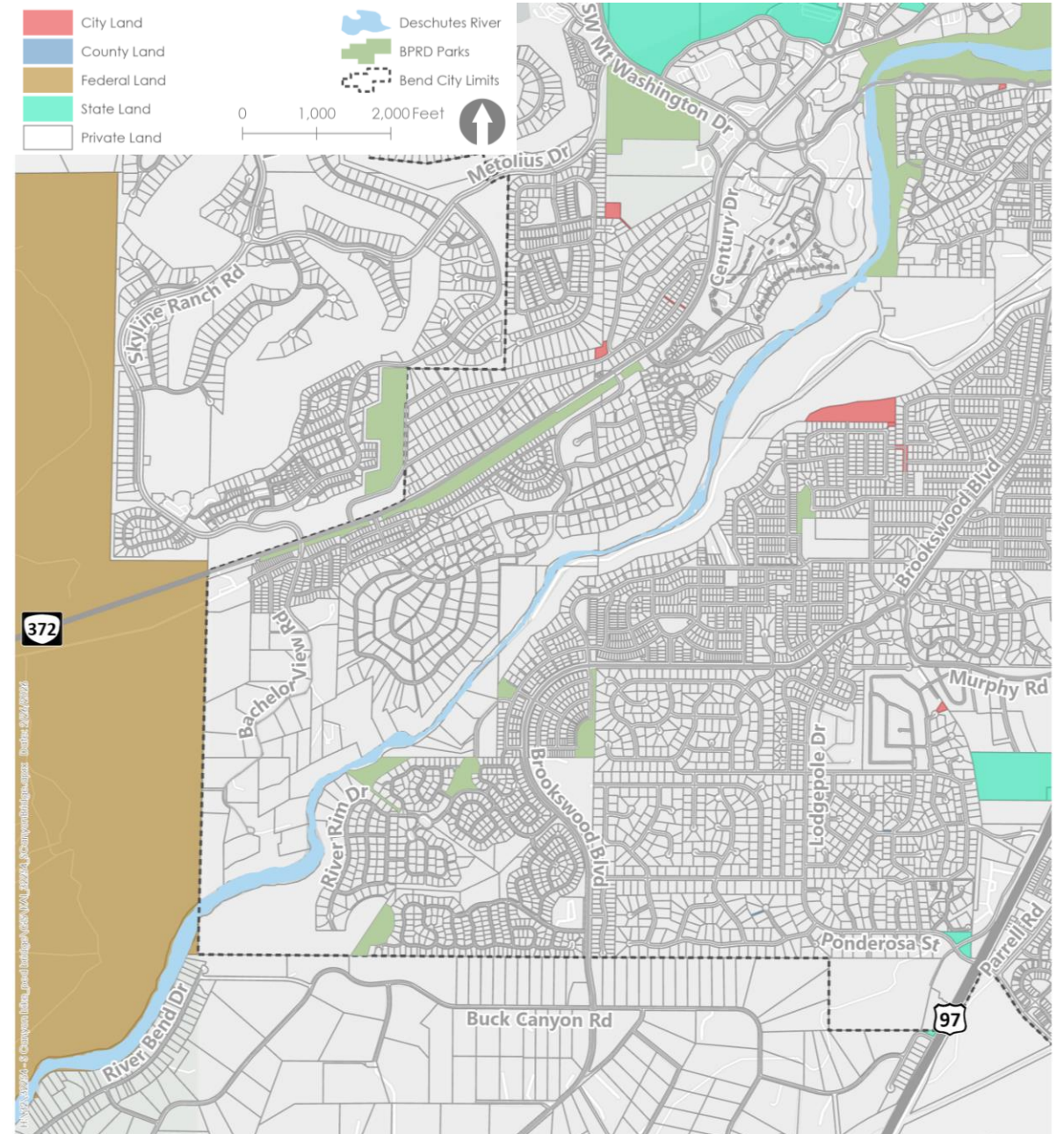
# ZONING AND OVERLAY DISTRICTS ADD ADDITIONAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Land within the study area is mainly zoned residential.
- City and County zoning overlays around the Deschutes River create additional considerations.



# PROPERTY OWNERSHIP IN VICINITY

- Much of the river frontage in the study area is privately owned.
- Accessing federal land would require crossing private property.



# SUMMARY OF KEY EXISTING CONDITIONS FINDINGS

## Potential Bridge Span

Up to 220 feet distances could be considered

## Steep terrain

Extremely steep, challenging terrain in parts of the study area.

## Complex regulations

Land use and environmental rules are a primary consideration for future alignments.

## Mixed ownership

Bridge and trail alternatives would likely need to consider both private and public land.

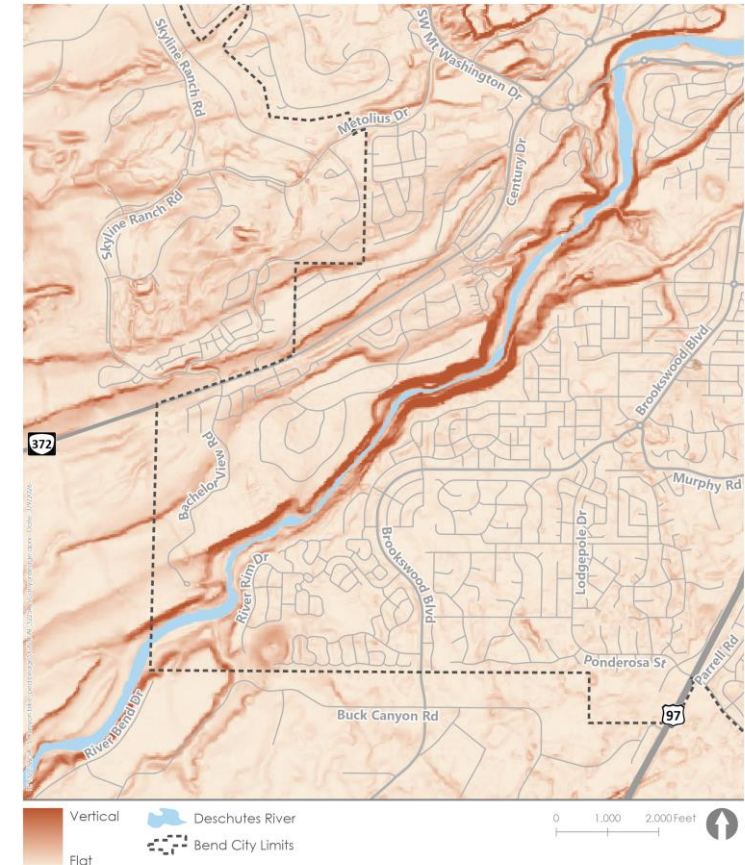
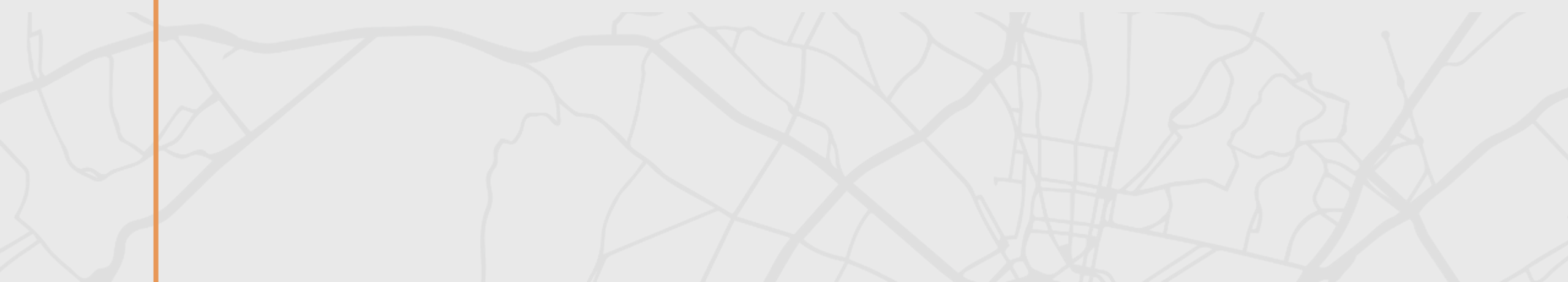


Figure 7

Terrain Slope within Study Area  
Bend, Oregon



# PUBLIC TOUCHPOINT #1 OVERVIEW



# PUBLIC TOUCHPOINT #1

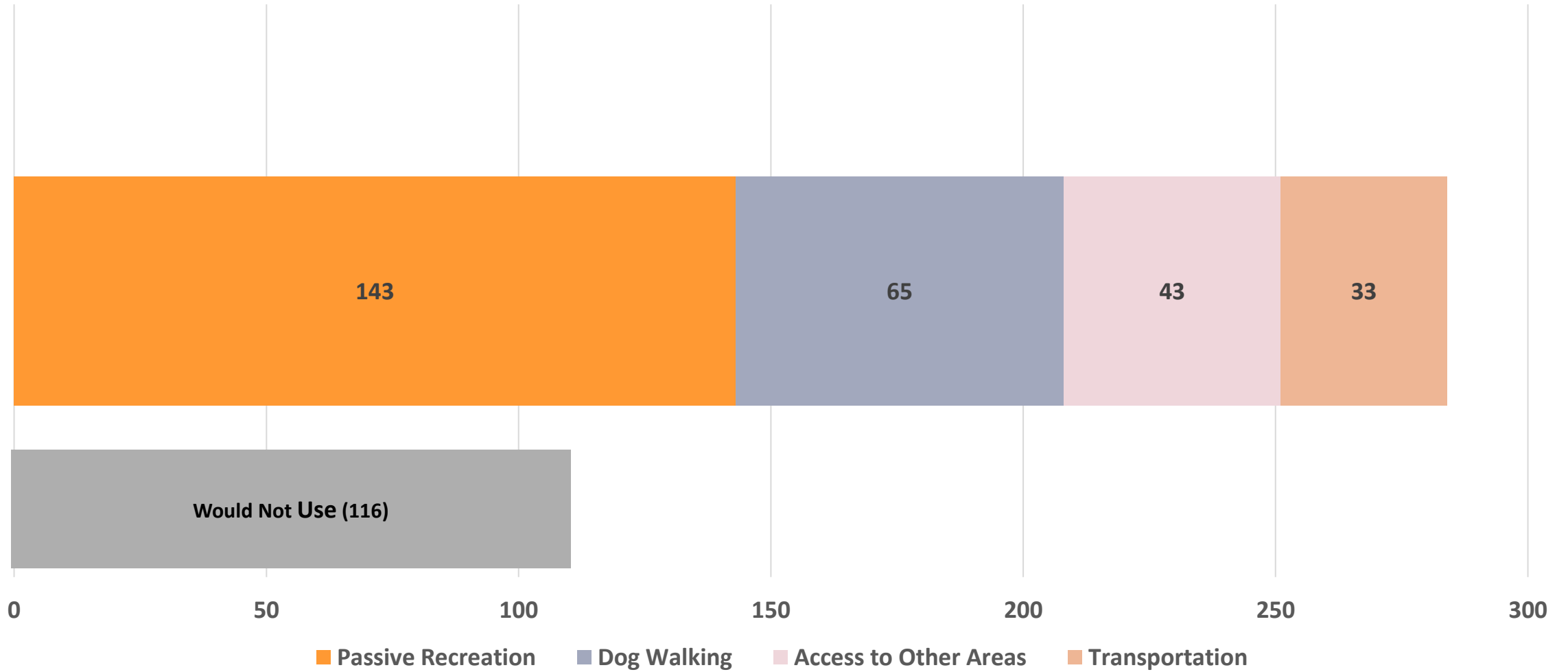
IN-PERSON OPEN HOUSE: >200 ATTENDEES

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE: 735 VIEWS & 175 RESPONSES

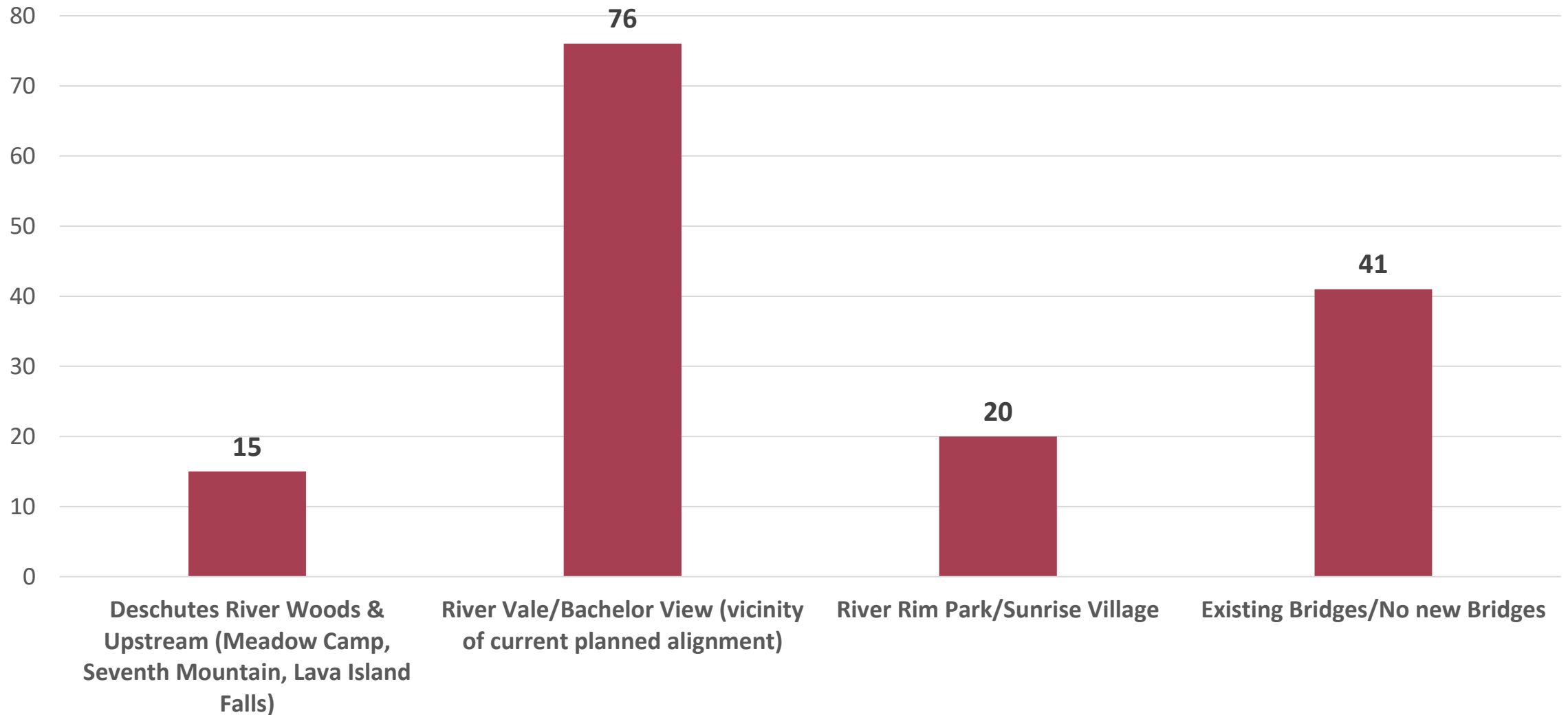
EMAIL: 90+ MESSAGES



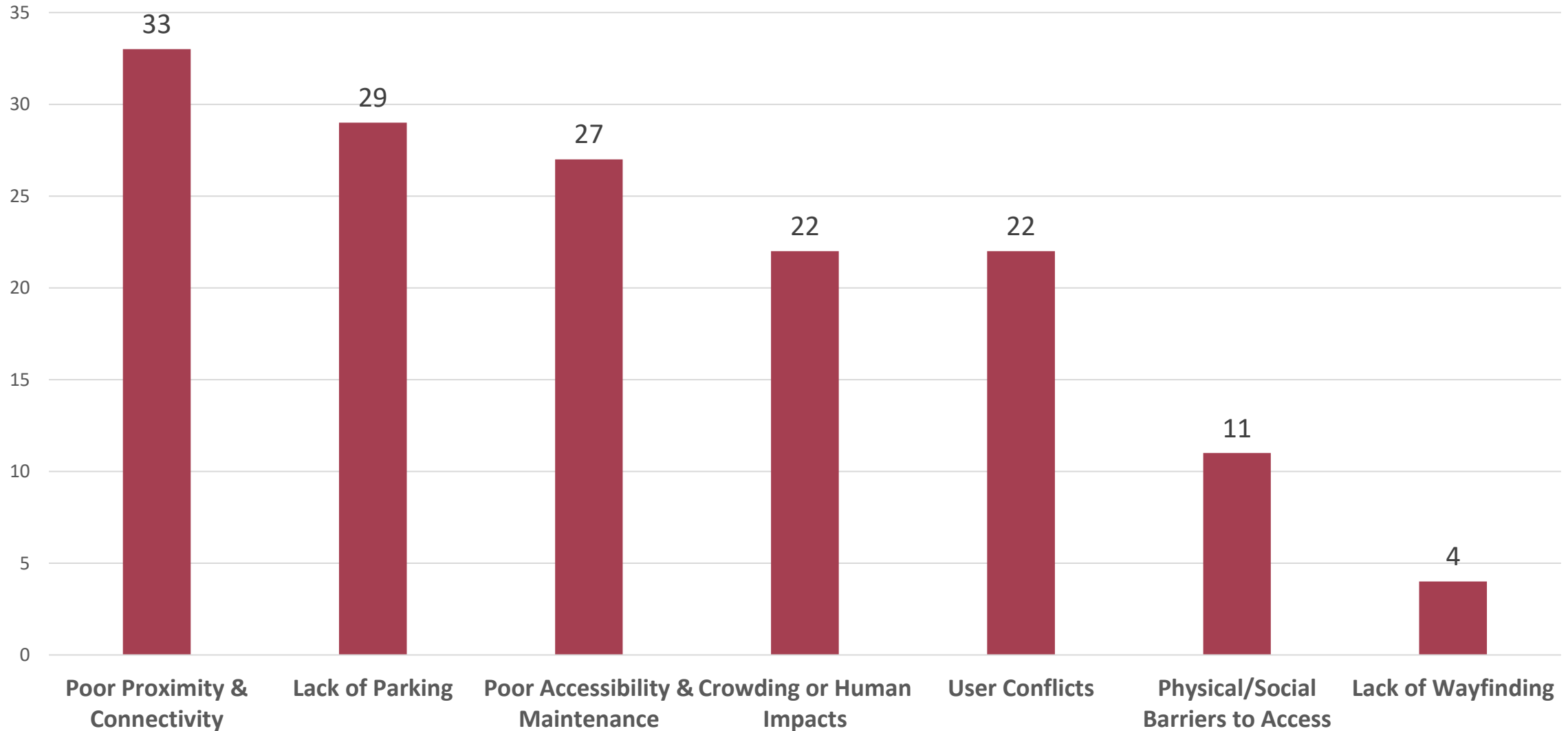
# HOW WOULD YOU USE THIS CONNECTION IF COMPLETED?



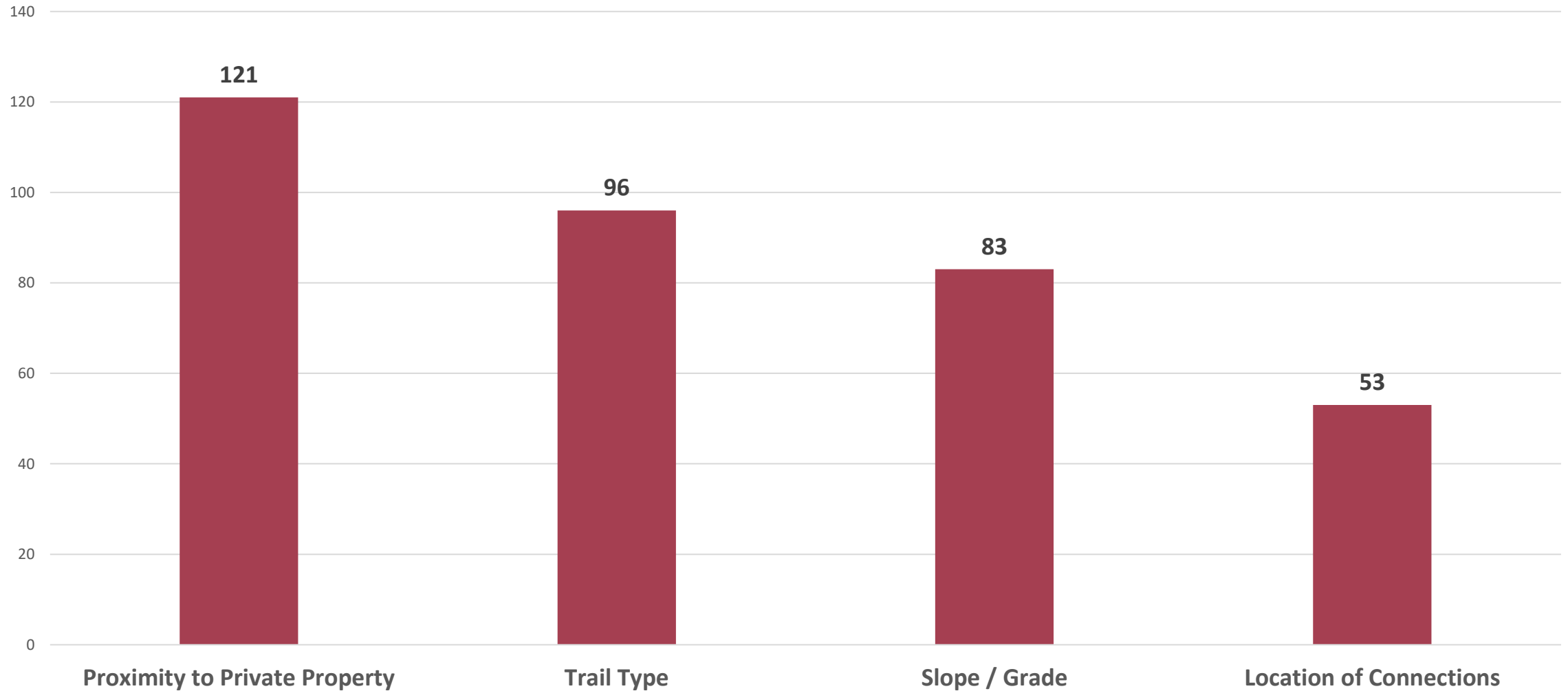
# WHAT LOCATIONS DO YOU SEE AS POTENTIAL FUTURE TRAIL CONNECTIONS OR A RIVER CROSSING?



# WHAT THINGS MAY PREVENT USE OF A TRAIL TO ITS FULL EXTENT?



# WHAT TRAIL CHARACTERISTICS SHOULD WE CONSIDER?

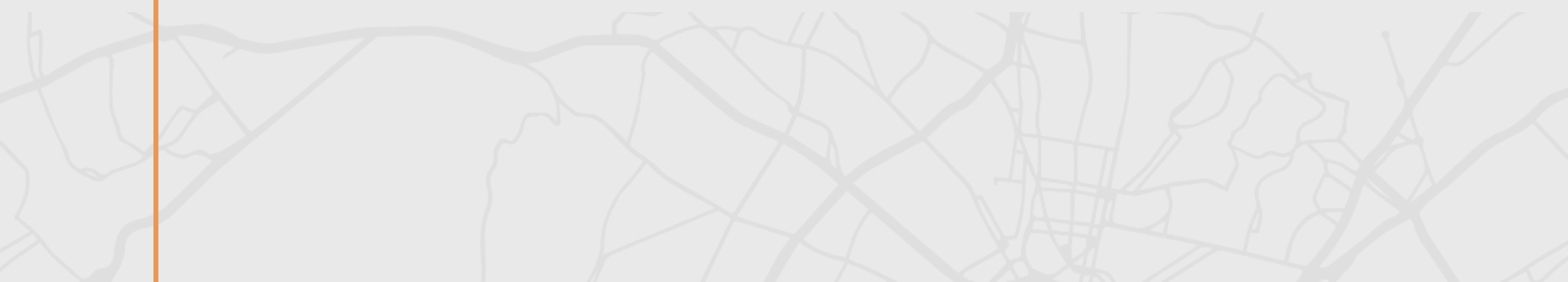


# SUMMARY OF UNIQUE COMMENTS

- **Support – 65 (25%)**
  - Connectivity, recreational access
  - Public support
- **Strong Opposition - 58 (22%)**
  - Scenic Waterway Rules
  - Environmental Concerns
  - Private Property Impacts
- **Conditional Opposition – 38 (15%)**
  - Perceived threats to off-leash access
  - Private property impacts
  - Cost
  - Wildfire Risk
- **Neutral/Unclear - 99 (38%)**



# ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT



# PROJECT GOALS

BPRD has identified five goals for this project:



## **Complete the trail**

Complete the southern portion of the Deschutes River Trail.



## **Protect the river corridor**

Minimize impacts on the natural environment and the scenic qualities of the Deschutes River.



## **Enhance forest access**

Provide enhanced non-motorized access to the Deschutes National Forest.



## **Recreate close to home**

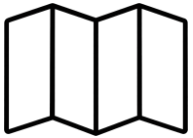
Provide close-to-home recreation opportunities.



## **Shorten the trip**

Reduce travel length and time to the Rimrock Trailhead from Southwest Bend.

# STEP 1: SECTIONAL ANALYSIS



## **Define four sections**

The study area has four sections based on environmental regulations, property ownership, terrain, and existing infrastructure.



## **Evaluate each section**

Consistent conditions within each section allowed evaluation of the section as a whole, rather than alignment by alignment.



## **Remove fatal flaws**

Sections with fatal flaws did not advance: constructability challenges or no ability to enhance Deschutes River Trail connectivity.

## STEP 2: ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT AND INITIAL SCREENING



### **Develop alternatives**

Trail alignments and crossing locations focused only on sections that advanced.

Sources included background research, field visits, stakeholder coordination, and public input.



### **Screen for feasibility**

Each alternative underwent screening for major feasibility issues.

Considerations included private property impacts, construction challenges, and accessibility for people with disabilities or limited mobility.

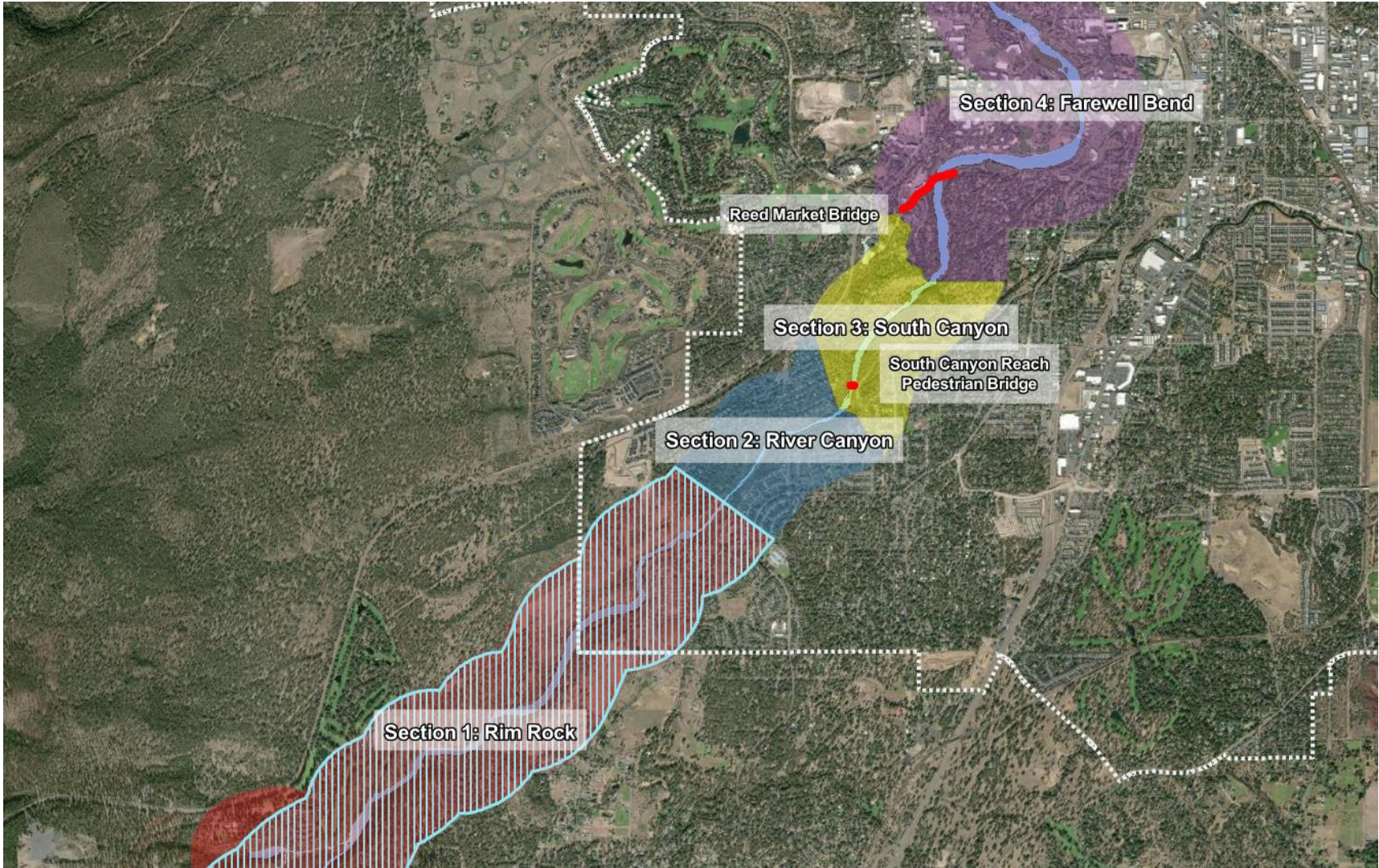


### **Advance promising options**

Alignments with major issues did not advance.

The remaining potentially promising alternatives advance to detailed evaluation.

# SECTIONAL MAP



# SECTIONAL ANALYSIS CRITERIA

Sections were evaluated against three potential major limitations.



## **Environmental and regulatory constraints**

Alignments avoiding designated areas are more feasible. Scenic waterway areas remain under consideration understanding there is a complex approval process.



## **Constructability**

River width, grades, and steep canyon walls determine where a crossing and trail can physically be built.



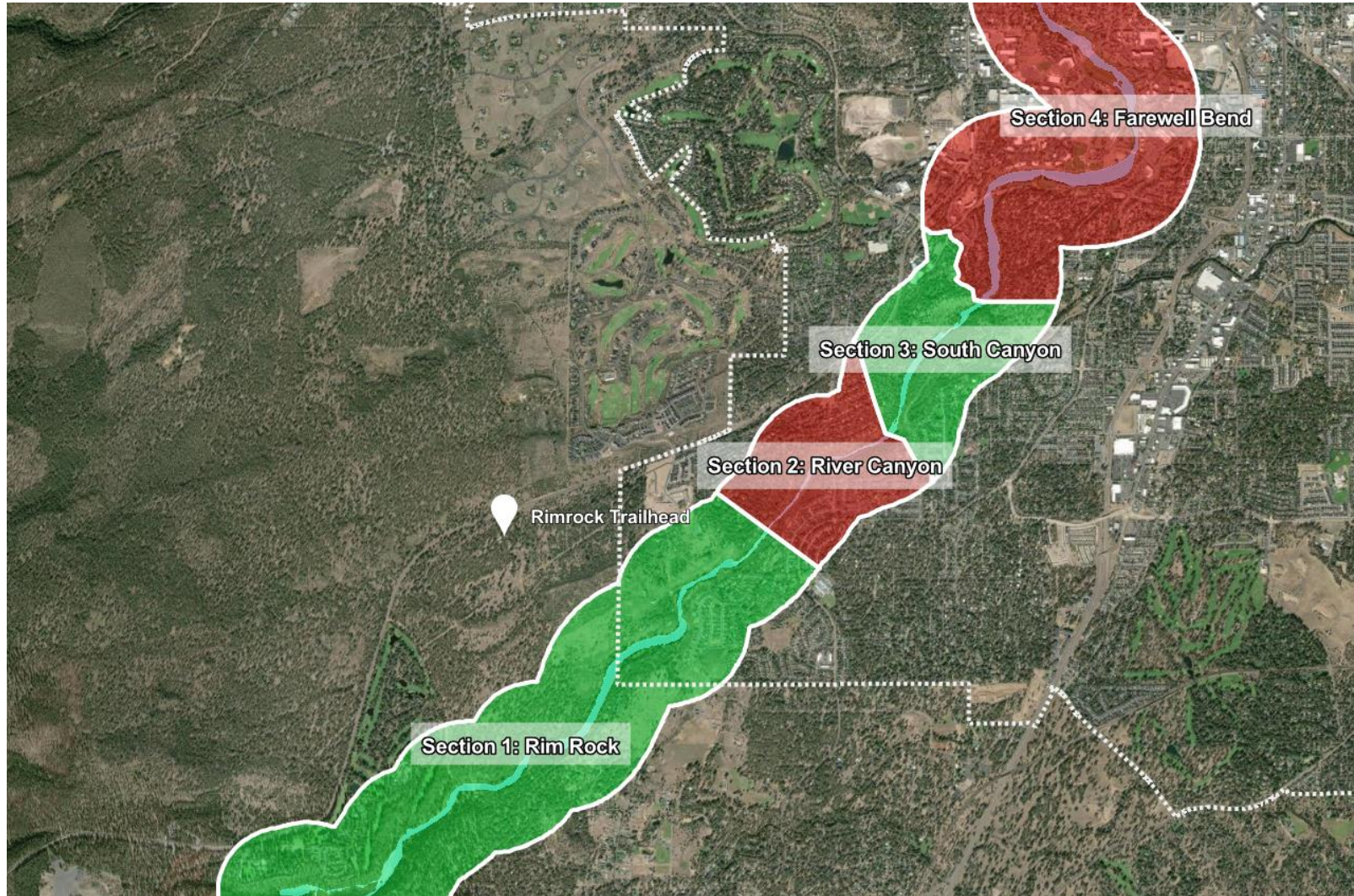
## **Deschutes River Trail connectivity**

Crossings near the trail gap are rated positively. Alignments farther upriver would add out-of-direction travel.

# SECTIONAL ANALYSIS RESULTS

| River Sections              | Environmental and Regulatory Constraints | Constructability | Connectivity to Existing DRT | Evaluation Result                            |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Section 1:<br>Rim Rock      |                                          |                  |                              | <b>Advance to alternative development</b>    |
| Section 2: River Canyon     |                                          |                  |                              | <i>Eliminated from further consideration</i> |
| Section 3:<br>South Canyon  |                                          |                  |                              | <b>Advance to alternative development</b>    |
| Section 4:<br>Farewell Bend |                                          |                  |                              | <i>Eliminated from further consideration</i> |

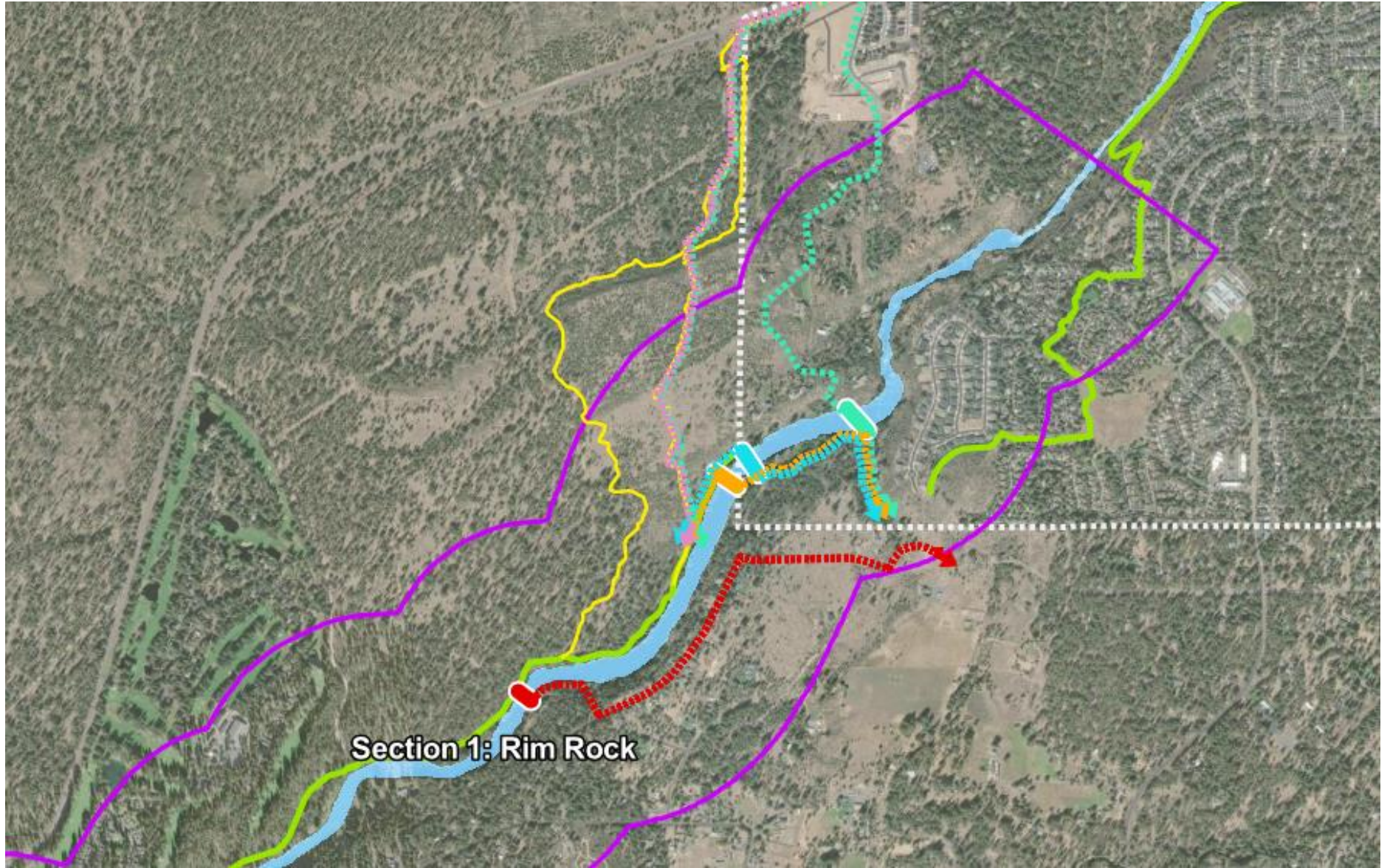
# SECTIONAL ANALYSIS RESULTS MAP



# SECTION 1 ALTERNATIVES

4

River crossing  
alternatives  
developed  
and screened  
in Section 1



# ALTERNATIVE 1A

## RECOMMENDATION

**Don't Advance**

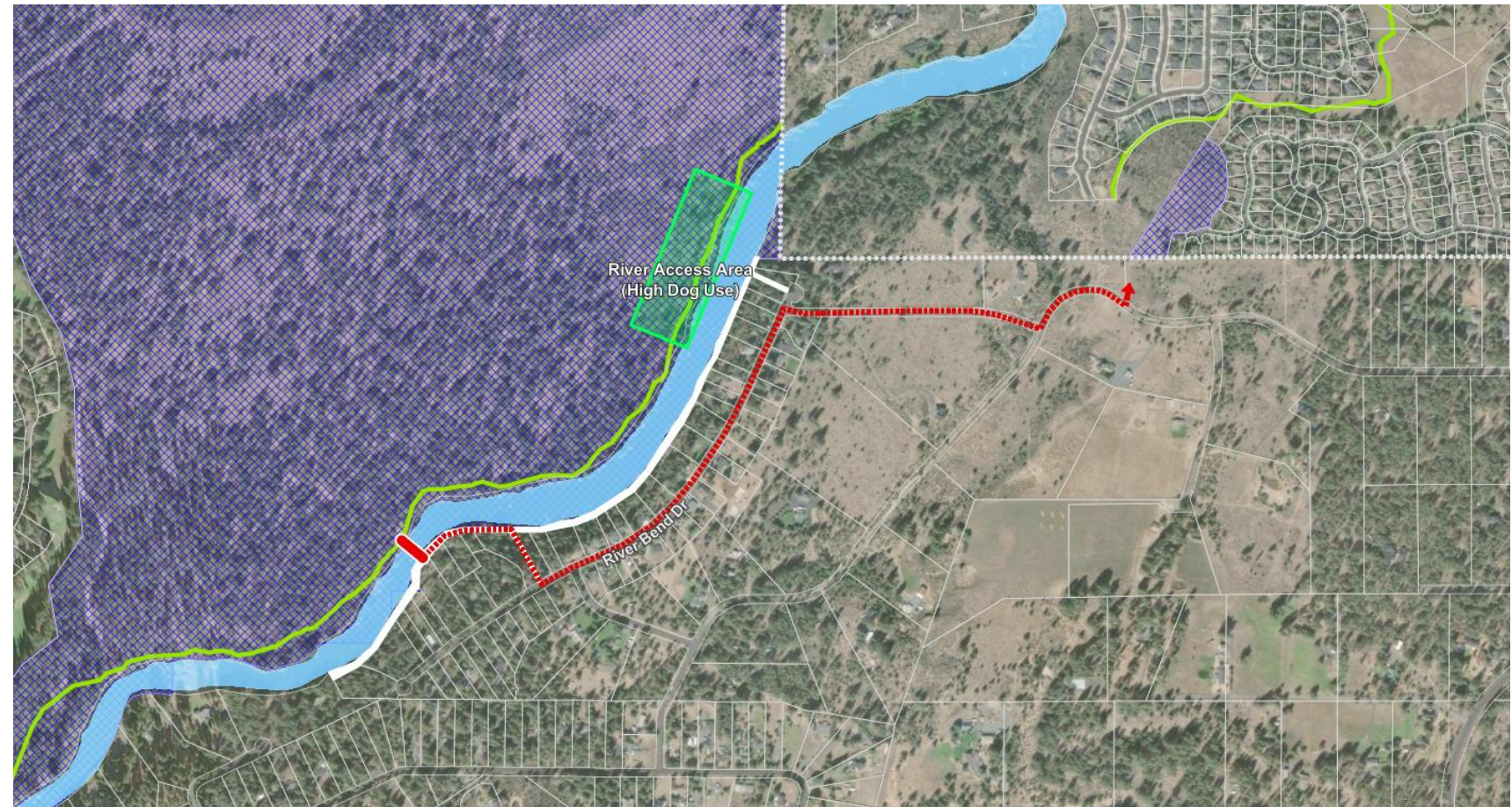
## ROUTE CONCEPT

**Use existing easement**

## KEY CONSTRAINTS

Easement cannot be modified for trail use

Steep grade makes the route infeasible



# ALTERNATIVE 1B

## RECOMMENDATION

**Advance for  
Further Analysis**

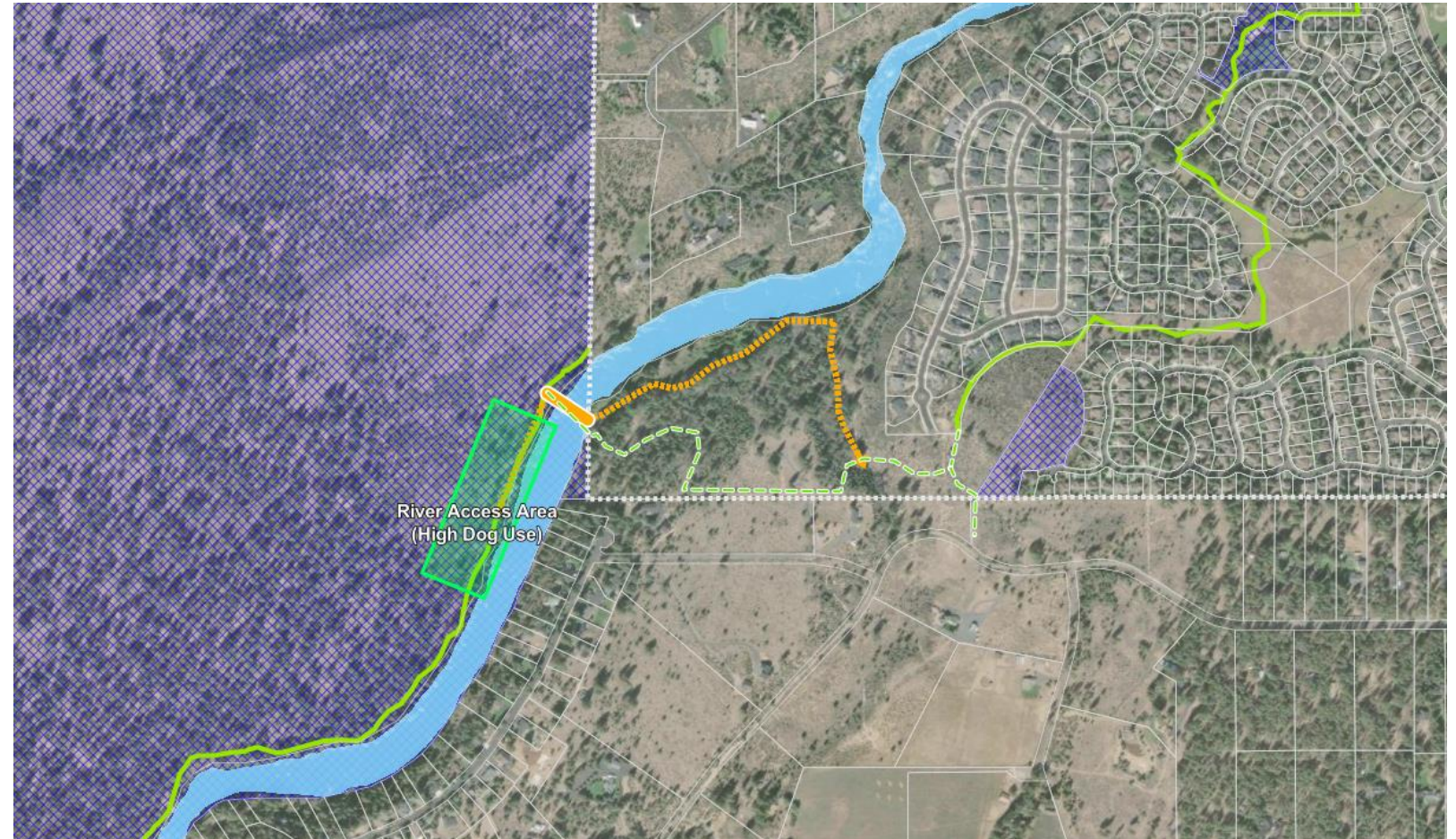
## ROUTE CONCEPT

**Construct crossing  
near existing Comp  
Plan alignment**

## KEY CONSTRAINTS

Scenic Waterways

Private property impacts



# ALTERNATIVE 1C

## RECOMMENDATION

**Advance for  
Further Analysis**

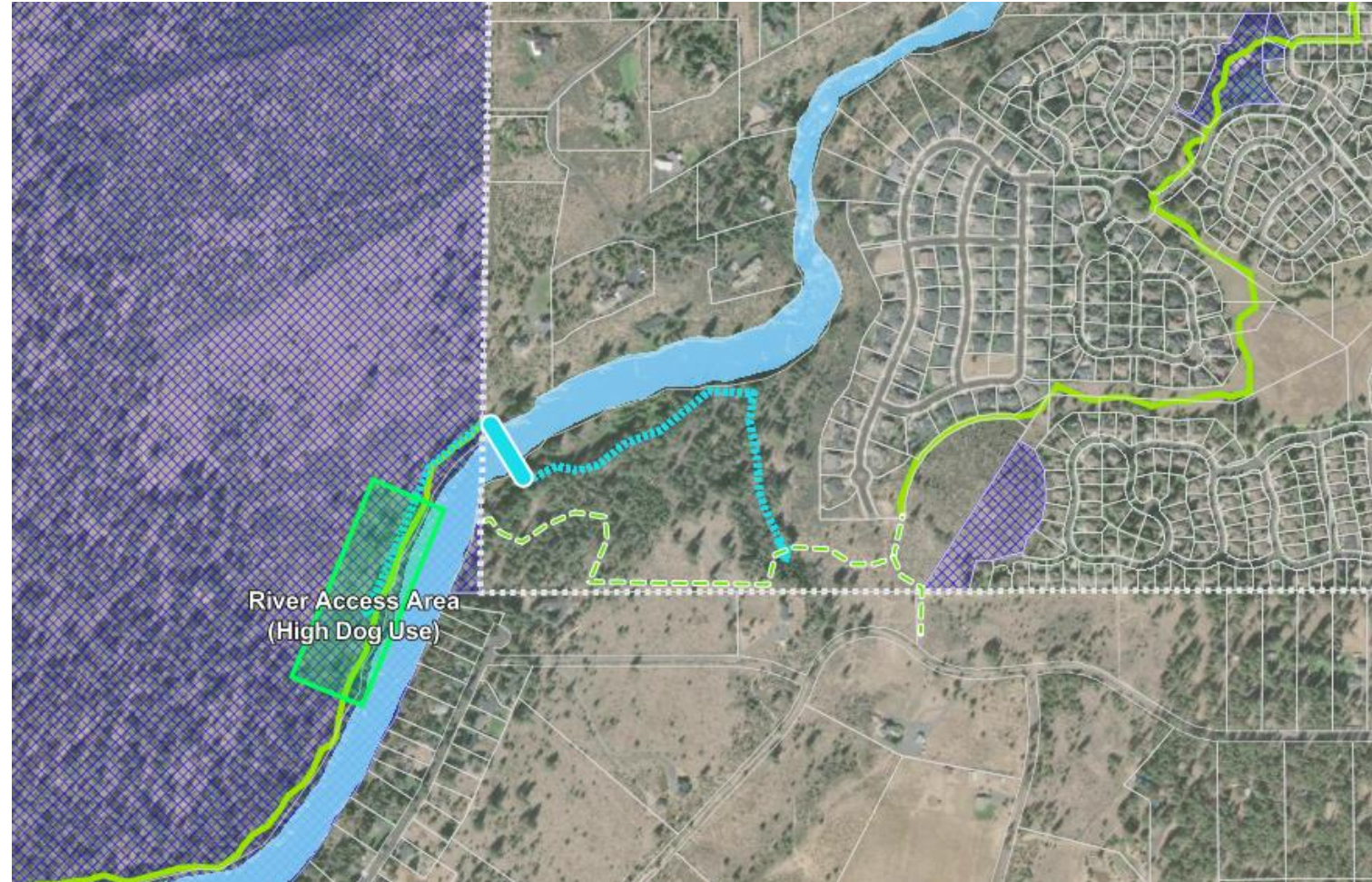
## ROUTE CONCEPT

**Construct crossing  
inside UGB near  
existing Comp Plan  
alignment**

## KEY CONSTRAINTS

Scenic Waterways

Private property impacts



# ALTERNATIVE 1D

## RECOMMENDATION

**Don't Advance**

## ROUTE CONCEPT

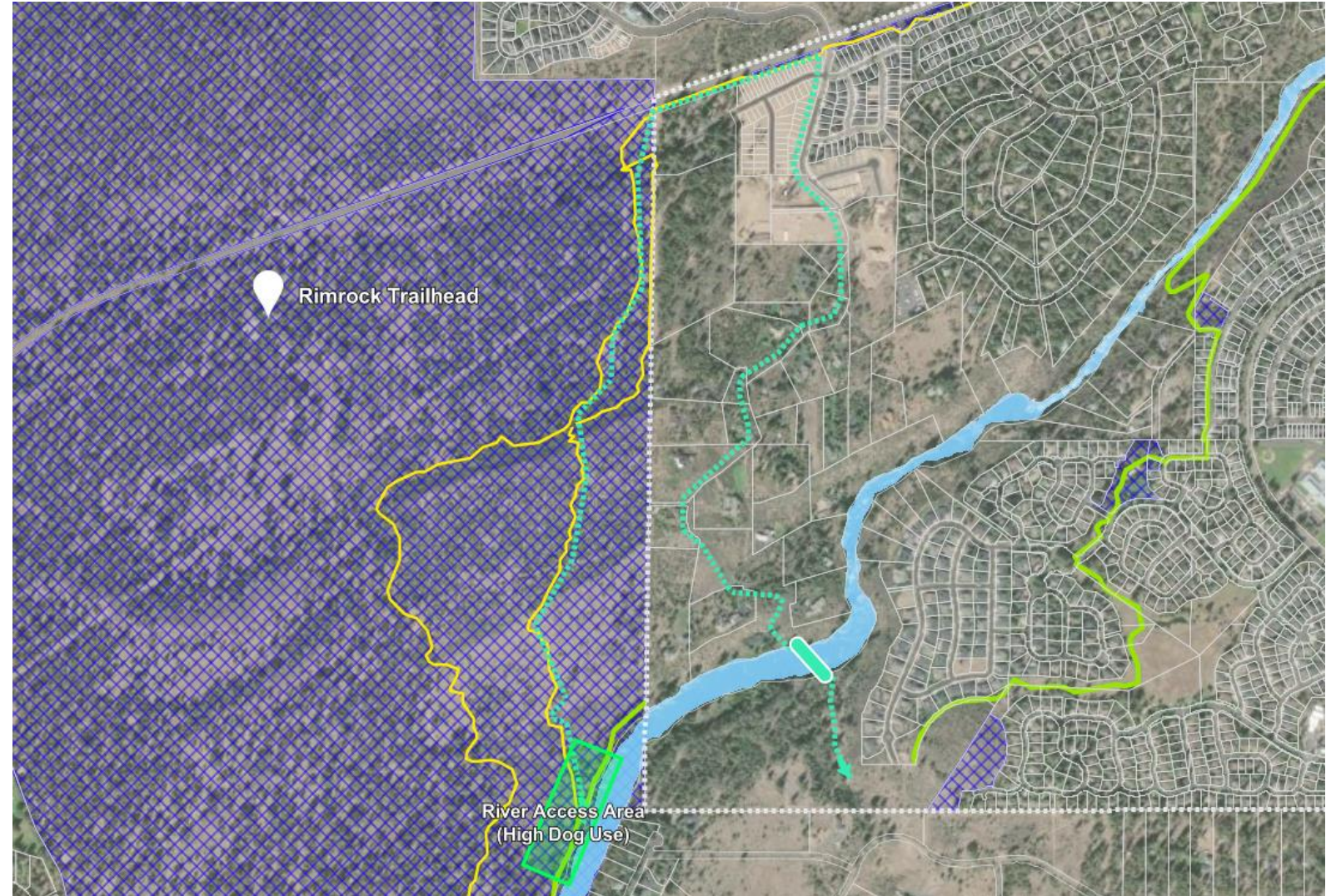
**Use Bachelor View  
Drive corridor for trail**

## KEY CONSTRAINTS

Significant out of  
direction travel.

Steep grade

Private property impacts



# ALTERNATIVE 3

## RECOMMENDATION

### Advance for Further Analysis

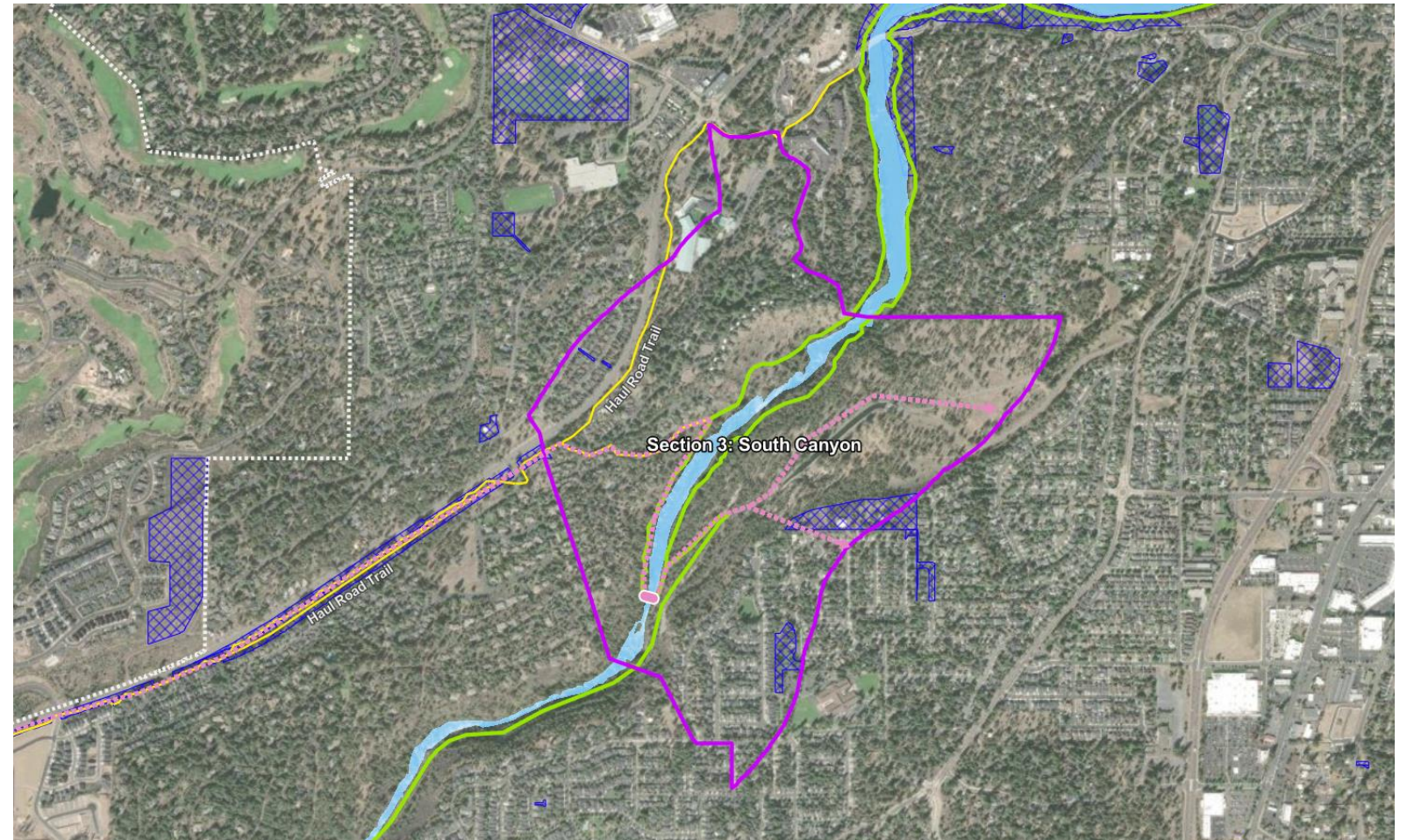
## ROUTE CONCEPT

**Improve existing South  
Canyon Bridge and  
surrounding trails**

## KEY CONSTRAINTS

Does not fill identified  
gap

Existing bridge and  
easement would need to  
be modified



# ALTERNATIVES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

## Alternative 1B

### ROUTE CONCEPT

New crossing near the existing Comp Plan alignment.

### KEY CONSTRAINTS

Scenic Waterways

Private property impacts

## Alternative 1C

### ROUTE CONCEPT

New crossing inside the UGB, near the existing Comp Plan alignment.

### KEY CONSTRAINTS

Scenic Waterways

Private property impacts

## Alternative 3

### ROUTE CONCEPT

Improve the existing South Canyon Bridge and surrounding trails.

### KEY CONSTRAINTS

Does not fill the identified gap

Existing bridge and easement need modification

# PROPOSED REVIEW CRITERIA

|                                                                                     | Evaluation Metric                    | What We Will Evaluate                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Travel Time and Demand</b>        | <p>Travel time between Southwest Bend and the Rimrock Trailhead and anticipated trail use.</p> <p><b>Shorter travel times and higher demand perform better.</b></p>                                                             |
|    | <b>Accessibility and Ease of Use</b> | <p>Grades, surface conditions, ease of travel, rest opportunities, and usability for people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p><b>More comfortable and accessible routes perform better.</b></p>                                 |
|  | <b>Safety and User Experience</b>    | <p>Separation from vehicles, roadway crossings, interactions with adjacent uses, and access to riverfront and rimrock scenery.</p> <p><b>Safer routes with fewer conflicts and a better user experience perform better.</b></p> |

# PROPOSED REVIEW CRITERIA

## Evaluation Metric

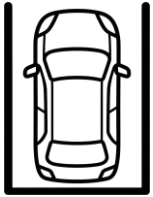
## What We Will Evaluate



### Private Property Impact

Number of private parcels affected and approximate easement or right-of-way needs.

**Fewer affected parcels and less acquisition perform better.**



### Trailhead Parking

Availability and proximity of viable existing or potential parking areas relative to anticipated demand.

**Better accommodation of parking demand performs better.**

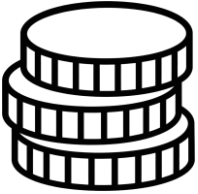


### Environmental Impact

Potential effects on wetlands, wildlife habitat, and other sensitive resources, including mitigation needs.

**Fewer impacts and less complex mitigation perform better.**

# PROPOSED REVIEW CRITERIA

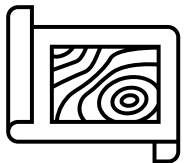
|                                                                                     | Evaluation Metric                       | What We Will Evaluate                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Regulatory Requirements</b>          | <p>Level of federal, state, and local review, permitting, and coordination required.</p> <p><b>Fewer requirements and simpler approvals perform better.</b></p>                                                      |
|    | <b>Magnitude of Cost</b>                | <p>High-level construction and implementation costs, considering terrain, bridge needs, site constraints, and regulatory factors.</p> <p><b>Lower costs and fewer costly challenges perform better.</b></p>          |
|  | <b>Likelihood of Near-Term Delivery</b> | <p>Likelihood of delivery in 5 to 10 years, considering property, environmental, regulatory, cost, and other feasibility factors.</p> <p><b>Fewer barriers and a clearer implementation path perform better.</b></p> |

# Scope of Work

## Phase 1: Existing Conditions



Document existing conditions



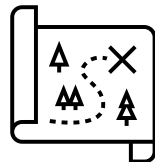
## Phase 2: Alternatives Development



Sectional (fatal flaw) analysis



Develop preliminary alternatives



## Phase 3: Alternatives Analysis



Alternatives Analysis



Identify two "preferred" alternatives



Board Approval for Phase 4



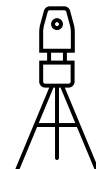
## Phase 4: Feasibility Studies



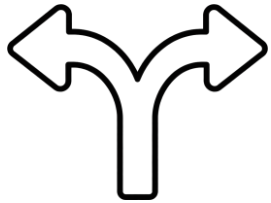
Draft Feasibility Studies



Final Feasibility Studies



# QUESTIONS FOR THE BOARD



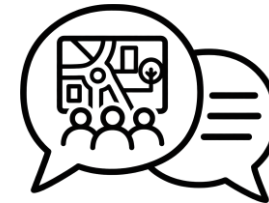
## **Continue analysis?**

Do you support continued analysis in Sections 1 and 3?



## **More information?**

What additional information would you like about the alternatives?



## **Other feedback?**

What feedback do you have on the process or next steps?